



EDF statement in advance of house hearing on failure by the Trump EPA to protect workers from toxic chemicals

By [Richard Denison](#) / [Bio](#) / Published: March 12, 2019

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Tomorrow, the House Energy and Commerce Committee's Subcommittee on the Environment and Climate Change will hold an oversight hearing on "[Mismanaging Chemical Risks: EPA's Failure to Protect Workers](#)." In advance of the hearing, Environmental Defense Fund lead senior scientist, [Dr. Richard Denison](#), made the following statement:

"Under the Trump Administration, every aspect of EPA's implementation of the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) — our recently reformed chemical safety law — has gone off the rails. The Trump EPA has abdicated its authority and responsibility under the law to address risks to workers. Among the ways EPA has shirked these duties are the following:

- **Clearing new chemicals despite risks to workers.** EPA has approved new chemicals for unfettered market access even where the agency has identified significant risks to workers or has indicated it has insufficient information to determine risks to workers. EPA has done so for many dozens of chemicals.
- **Abandoning worker protections from methylene chloride.** EPA is poised to finalize a ban of methylene chloride-based paint strippers far narrower than the one it proposed over two years ago. While consumer uses will be banned, EPA will not limit commercial uses, leaving workers, who are most at risk from these products, unprotected.
- **Ignoring worker safety in chemical risk evaluations under TSCA.** In the only draft risk evaluation of a chemical issued to date, EPA relied exclusively on a single undocumented workplace air concentration value, provided through a private personal communication by a conflicted industry source, as the basis to conclude that workers across the supply chain for this chemical face no significant exposure to the chemical.

“Oversight of this EPA’s reckless approach to worker protection under existing law is long overdue. We applaud the subcommittee for holding this hearing. This EPA is putting the public’s health – especially worker’s health — at risk by systematically weakening and undermining chemical safety: the agency must be held accountable.”



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